



Caltrans Coastal Program

Early & Ongoing Coordination with the Coastal Commission

FACT SHEET NO. 2 | DECEMBER 2014

The Caltrans Coastal Program (CP) supports early and ongoing coordination with the California Coastal Commission (Commission) for projects that must comply with the Coastal Act. Coordination with the Commission throughout project delivery is recommended to improve communication and result in timely approval of Coastal Development Permits (CDPs).

Benefits of Early and Ongoing Coordination

The various stages of Caltrans project delivery—scoping, environmental document preparation, design, and permitting—benefit from close coordination with Commission staff.

Early Coordination

Early coordination with Commission staff at the outset of project development can:

- identify permit requirements that may not be otherwise realized until the application is reviewed,
- identify conditions that must be met,
- reduce delays, scope changes, and additional costs,
- determine specific technical studies or other documents needed to process a permit, and
- identify fatal flaws or Coastal Act compliance issues.

Ongoing Coordination

Ongoing coordination with Commission staff during a project's development, and prior to the submittal of a CDP application, can:

- minimize surprises as the CDP is prepared,
- help avoid project delays,
- expedite permit processing, and
- build good working relationships.

Successful collaboration throughout the development of a project should result in a permit application submittal that is comprehensive, inclusive of the specific – but often nuanced – requirements of the Commission, and approved without unanticipated conditions.

When and How Should Coordination Occur?

Coordination with the Commission should begin during the project's scoping phase, when the following information can be shared:

- Purpose and need
- Complete project description
- Schedule
- Jurisdictional boundaries

Opportunities for coordination with Commission staff are available through the Caltrans CP Manager, bi-annual workload coordination meetings, Project Development Team meetings, or arranging meetings with Commission staff through the District coastal liaisons.

Ongoing Coordination Opportunity: Environmental Document Preparation

Active engagement and coordination with the Commission during environmental document preparation is essential to determine if your project can be permitted under the Coastal Act. Meeting with Commission staff to discuss the project's impact analysis for key coastal resources can offer helpful insight into subject areas the Commission is interested in related to the CDP, and can ensure the environmental document contains an adequate analysis of those key resources. By doing so, you may avoid the need to substantially update or conduct additional analysis later in the CDP process.

The following coordination opportunities are suggested during the preparation of the environmental document:

- Prepare a presentation or memorandum outlining sections of interest, including:
 - ~ Purpose and need
 - ~ Project description and alternatives
 - ~ Potential coastal resource impacts (land use, visual resources, agriculture, wetlands, vegetation)
- Meet with Commission staff to review these sections
- As the CEQA/NEPA lead agency, consider Commission staff suggestions for the alternatives analysis and mitigation measures and update the draft environmental document as needed

Early Coordination Meeting Topics

Items that can be discussed at an early coordination meeting with Commission staff include:

- ☐ Project proponents and lead agency status
- ☐ Project description
- ☐ Purpose and need
- ☐ Project schedule
- ☐ Jurisdictional boundaries: determine local coastal jurisdictions, if any
- ☐ Agreement on type of permit required
- ☐ Public access issues (parking, coastal access, etc.)
- ☐ Alternatives analysis
- ☐ Project impacts, particularly potential impacts to wetlands, environmentally sensitive habitat areas, agricultural or cultural resources
- ☐ Potential need for shoreline protection (sea wall, rip-rap, stream stabilization, etc.)
- ☐ Avoidance measures (no project, re-design, downscope)
- ☐ Impact minimization
- ☐ Design considerations (rail barriers to open or maintain views, aesthetic treatments, native landscaping, etc.)
- ☐ Mitigation
- ☐ Monitoring
- ☐ Special interest group identification